

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for processing print jobs in a network containing a plurality of client stations adapted to submit print jobs, and at least one printing device containing a control unit and a printer, the control unit including storage means for storing print jobs submitted to the printing device, which comprises means for generating and submitting a print account job containing account information of a print job, wherein the print account job is linked to the corresponding print job by a linking identifier, and means for validating stored print jobs for printing, wherein said validating means receives account jobs and validates a corresponding print job for printing in the case a valid account job has been received.

2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the client station comprises a job submitter including said means for generating and submitting print account jobs.

3. The system according to claim 2, wherein a server station is adapted to intercept a submitted print job, said server station comprising means for generating and submitting a print account job containing account information of the intercepted print job, wherein the print account job is linked to the corresponding print job by a linking identifier.

4. The system according to claim 3, wherein the server station is adapted to communicate with a client station to obtain account information of the intercepted print job for insertion in the print account job.

5. The system according to claim 1, wherein a printer server comprises said means for validating stored print jobs for printing, and wherein said validating means validates a print job by generating a print validation command for a corresponding print job and submitting the print validation command to the printing device.

6. The system according to claim 1, wherein the control unit of the printing device is adapted to receive print jobs and print account jobs, and wherein said validating means are part of the control unit of the printing device.

7. The system according to claim 6, wherein the control unit of the printing device stores all submitted print and account jobs in a holding queue in the storage means, said control unit being arranged to check stored print and account jobs in order to match linked print and account jobs, so that in the case where a print job is matched with an account job, the account information is checked, and if the account information is valid, the print job is removed from the holding queue and validated for printing and the account job is removed from the holding queue and the account

information is stored in the storage means.

8. A printing device, comprising a control unit and a printer, the control unit including storage means for storing print jobs in a holding queue; the control unit of the printing device being adapted to receive print jobs and print account jobs, wherein the control unit contains means for validating stored print jobs for printing, said validating means being adapted to receive account jobs and validate a corresponding print job for printing in case a valid account job has been received.

9. The printing device according to claim 8, wherein the control unit stores all submitted print and account jobs in a holding queue in the storage means, said control unit being arranged to check stored print and account jobs in order to match linked print and account jobs, wherein in the case where a print job is matched with an account job, account information is checked and if the account information is valid, the print job is removed from the holding queue and validated for printing and the account job is removed from the holding queue and the account information is stored in the storage means.

10. A client station for use in a system for processing print jobs according to claim 1, the client station being adapted to submit print jobs, wherein a job submitter is provided, including means for generating and

submitting a print account job containing account information of a print job, the print account job being linked to the corresponding print job by a linking identifier.

11. A server station for use in a system according to claim 1, wherein the server station is adapted to intercept a submitted print job, the server station comprising means for generating and submitting a print account job containing account information of the intercepted print job, wherein the print account job is linked to the corresponding print job by a linking identifier.

12. The server station according to claim 11, which is adapted to communicate with a client station to obtain account information of the intercepted print job for insertion in the print account job.

13. A printer server for use in a system according to claim 1, including means for validating stored print jobs for printing, wherein the validating means validates a print job by generating a print validation command for a corresponding print job and submitting the print validation command to a printing device.

14. A computer program comprising program instructions for a computer to operate as a client station in the system of claim 1 when said

program runs on the computer.

15. A computer program comprising program instructions for a computer to operate as a control unit of the printing device in the system of claim 1 when said program runs on the computer.

16. A computer program comprising program instructions for directing a computer to operate as a server station in the system of claim 1 when said program runs on the computer.

17. A computer program comprising program instructions for directing a computer to operate as a printer server in the system of claim 1 when said program runs on the computer.